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SPIRITUALISM—Progress, the Universal Law of Nature: Thought, the Solvent of Her Problems.—SPIRITUALISM

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NO. 708.

SPIRIT, SPIRITUAL, SPIRITUALISM, SPIRITISM.

"CONFUSION WORSE CONFOUNDED."

One of the most difficult things in speaking or writing is to make ourselves understood. And one main reason for this is the difference meanings attached to the same words. Taking the meaning of the root term and comparing it with some of the secondary definitions often falls to show any apparent resemblance between them. Hence, it is one of the most common occurrences to find the most violent and unreasonable controversies carried on by parties using the same terms, but with entirely different meanings attached thereto.

It is doubtful if any words in our language have a wider latitude of meaning than those at the head of this article. Take the basic word spirit, from the Latin *spiro*, to breathe, and compare only three of the many meanings given to it. First, we have the natural meaning, breath of wind; second, alcohol or the spirit of wine; and third, the immortal entity or soul of man. To these we might add God, for it is affirmed that he is spirit.

With such a wide divergence of meaning, it is not wonderful that confusion in expression should be the result. And when we come to add the suffixes *spiritual*, *spiritualism*, *spiritism*, we may expect the confusion to be "worse confounded."

The evolution of new ideas renders it necessary to construct new terms or words for their expression. But instead of always doing this, new meanings are attached to existing terms, thus paving the way for division and strife. But it should never be overlooked by sensible people that every epoch in intellectual progress necessarily either discards old terms or attaching new meanings to old ones.

Now, if what is called Modern Spiritualism is a new epoch in thought evolution, the use of old terms, expressive of man's higher nature, will fall entirely to convey the correct ideas. The word *modern* is itself an affirmation of a radical distinction between it and ancient Spiritualism. When we speak of modern astronomy, every one knows that we mean astronomy as defined by the discoveries of Copernicus as opposed to the theories of Ptolemy. And we also know that the difference between them is enormous, not to say infinite. The science of modern chemistry has hardly a resemblance to ancient alchemy from which it sprang.

It is conceded that scientifically, philosophically and religiously, the revelation of the simple natural existence at the time of its advent. It was conceded, at the very outset, that a form of force or energy was used, in the production of its phenomena, unknown to the science of the world. And, even now, many make the same concession. This substantially creates a new science. But the force which raps, tips, writes and moves physical substances is found to be a heretofore uncomprehended relation to the human mind. And this relation is also found to so interpenetrate the religious experiences and manifestations of man, as a religious being, as to change the meaning of all the terminology of the religious world. Hence, to use the old terms in the old time sense is to utterly pervert the science and philosophy of the new mental era.

It is true that the same sun, earth and stars were the material bases of both Ptolemy and Copernicus. But, when you come to the relations and motions of these vast bodies, how absolutely unlike and opposite you find the theories. With Copernicus you have the heliocentric science instead of the geocentric imagination of Ptolemy. And that science made a new universe, and when comprehended a new religion. The discovery of a new law, or mode of motion in nature makes the universe new; so, in the realm of thought, a new idea makes all things new so far as man is concerned, individually and socially.

I am prepared to ask, what is the new fact, law or idea revealed by the modern spirit movement? There is no pretense that the phenomenal manifestations are in any sense new. There are as old as history, and have been more or less common amongst all peoples, in all times. Moreover, though human beings have, to some extent, been concerned as actors, yet they have invariably been attributed to some supra-human beings as the primary causes of the same.

I am now prepared to answer the question by saying that the only thing absolutely new in our modern era is the revelation of the complete naturalness of its phenomena! The supernatural—the miraculous—is swept forever out of the vocabulary of correct thinkers. This new fact in human development, transformed into idea in consciousness, makes all things new in science, philosophy and especially in religion. Just as the geocentric astronomy is dead and superseded by the heliocentric, so the old religions are dead and superseded by the revealed naturalism of the Modern Era. It is just as impossible for a man, who comprehends the science of the simple natural law, Jew, Christian, Mohammedan or Mormon as it would be for an educated astronomer to endure the geocentric theory. All these old religions are founded upon assumptive supernaturalism, which the spirit rappings completely demolish. The difference between the old and the new is not incidental but fundamental. One must destroy the other. The difference is in the cause or causative agency. With the old religions, it is gods or devils; while, with the new, it is men and women of their own free will. And as both have the same phenomena, "it follows as night the day" that there are no God-revelations, or God books—no Holy Ghost conversions, and no salvation through atoning grace, all of which involve the supernatural.

I am now prepared to take up and expound the terms at the head of this article. The word *Spiritualism*, so far as I can ascertain, was first employed to

distinguish the idealistic from the materialistic philosophy. The suffix *ism* denotes a doctrine or system of principles. Hence it signifies people, and is the term used by the materialists. But, in this word *Spiritualism*, we have a dual suffix to the word *spirit*; first *ul* and then *ism*. The suffix *ul* makes it an adjective and hence, indicates some quality possessed by the *ists*, and naturally pertaining to *spirit*. Now, what is that quality? Hosesays "the spiritual man is mad," and though it may be thought a mere judgment, yet it may be found to be a just one, to affirm that the spiritual class have always labored under a peculiar form of insanity. There has been a perverted form of mental and emotional activity. The blackest and bloodiest pages of history are descriptive of its most terrible manifestations. And the most ominous and menacing cloud in the future sky is this same spiritual insanity, which dominates so many millions of the human family. It includes the entire Christian church.

This term *spiritual* is the invention of the old, supernaturalistic religion, and has a specific meaning. According to that religion, man is not by nature spiritual but carnal; he is critical; and he becomes spiritual only by being regenerated by the Holy Ghost—"born of the spirit." He thus becomes a spiritual man. The "old man is put off," and the "new man put on," and the quality spiritual pertains to the "new man" which is supernatural. It is a miraculous process, and man can no more make himself spiritual than he can make himself into a horse. He is "created anew in Christ Jesus." By grace are ye saved, through faith and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.

Spiritual, Spirituality are nowhere dissociated from the supernatural. They belong to it as they originated from it. Now, as this term *spiritual* has no reference to man as man, is no quality of human nature as such, but to a supposed miraculous change wrought in him by a Holy Ghost, how can it be applied in a movement which is purely natural? Do you say that you don't mean what the makers of the word meant? What do you mean? Do you have reference to the mental, moral or emotional department of our nature? My opinion is that you merely parrot an old church term, supposing it has some meaning, but what it is you cannot define. As progressive thinkers, we cannot have a word as having any meaning when applied to our movement, any more than we can atonement, regeneration, salvation and other cant words of the old supernaturalism. They all belong to the cult of miracle and are meaningless in our terminology. And the influence of their use is reactionary, leading back to former superstitions.

The reader will be likely to ask, what of the term *Spiritualism*? In answer, I will say, that it is not an appropriate one, but it has been so long and so general in use that it is impossible to discontinue it. But the suffix *ism* should be expunged, and we should then have *spiritism*, which the French have always used. Look at the formation of the word. First, we have the root word, *spirit*, used as meaning a human entity. Then add *ul* signifying some real, or supposed quality of the personal spirit. We have converted our noun into an adjective. By adding another suffix, *ism*, we convert our adjective into a noun, meaning, not the doctrine or science of spirit, but of some quality of the noun spirit. But, as I have shown, this is not an inherent quality or attribute of spirit as there are confessedly multitudes of spirits who are not spiritual. It is a miraculous addition by supernatural power. By adding the suffix *ism* to *ul* we assume that a doctrine, or system of thought, can be predicated upon a mere quality of a thing, which is an utter absurdity. But, if *spiritism* denoted, as in the Christian nomenclature, a process by which the nature of spirit was essentially changed, made a new being, converted from a child of the Devil to a son of God, then the term *spiritism* would be appropriate, but not otherwise. And as we do not admit any such transformation, it is not logically consistent for us to use that term.

But *spiritism* covers the whole ground. It expresses the doctrine, the science, the philosophy of the spirit. In other words, it includes all we know of the attributes, functions, relations and manifestations of the spirit entity, which we call *humanity*. This includes the revelation of the complete naturalness of its phenomena! It discards the supernaturalism of former ignorance. It is science, it is philosophy. We begin by an analysis of facts or phenomena, and reach principles or causative energies. We then synthesize, combine, and find that all the units of being, are but parts of one stupendous whole. We have then the term *spiritism*, which is the work of supernatural power, and are ourselves vitally related to every part and energy of universal being. There is but one nature, hence, *spiritism* is pure naturalism, and to prefix supernatural to the work of supernatural ignorance, just the same as suffixing *ul* to *spirit*. Both are the mistakes of the immature childhood of evolving humanity. It is high time to "put away childish things." *Spiritism*, *spirituality* and *Spiritualism* are terms which of right belong to the old church as they are part of their supernaturalism. They harmonize with their God, Christ, Holy Ghost and divine inspiration, but are no part of our universal naturalism. With the old religion, God is all; with *spiritism*, nature is all. There cannot be two alms or wholeness. Nature is unchanging, eternal. Where is there a place left for the God, and what is there for him to do anyway?

Logical reasoning upon any known fact, or working of the cosmos brings us face to face with ever living, ever working nature, but nowhere shows us the faintest trace of a creative or working God. Hence, *spiritism* never directs us to God, or to anything outside of it, or

above nature. But the credulists of the N. S. A. can consistently use the terms *Spiritual*, *Spirituality* and *Spiritualism*, for by their creed they proclaim that they are supernaturalists. In it, they affirm, an Intelligence of which "the phenomena of nature, physical and spiritual, are the expressions." No language could affirm supernaturalism in a stronger manner than this. All the motions of nature, all the actions of all beings are the expressions, the productions of the new named God. The name is all there is new, for it is the same old character which "made good and created evil" in Old Testament revelations. Genuine spiritists, having outgrown all phases of supernaturalism, cannot unite with the N. S. A. any more honestly than they can with the old religions. The natural and the supernatural cannot be welded together. The attempt so to do, by the N. S. A., is working and will continue to work in the interest of the church, and against the progress of genuine spiritism. And the use of the terms *spiritual* and *spirituality* aids in the same direction.

J. S. LOVELAND.
Summerland, Cal.

A VALUABLE ESSAY.

Nora Batchelor in the Defense of Spiritualism.

To the Editor:—In the last number of your valuable paper, No. 704, the essay by Nora Batchelor is the most valuable contribution that ever I have read in any spiritual paper since Charles Part-ridge published the Spiritist Telegraph away back in the fifties. I began the investigation of spiritual manifestations in 1849; Miss Katie Fox was then but thirteen years old. I have seen and proved every phenomena and more referred to in the essay, with one exception. I am pretty sure I antedate every Spiritualist except Dr. A. J. Davis in this or any other country. I made the first speech in defense of our cause in St. Louis, in 1849, and have made hundreds since. I consider the facts concerning the continuance of life superior to every and all other demonstrations or arguments. I have very little patience with anything else. It was facts that led the inhabitants of this planet to investigate the manifestations, and it is facts and only facts that will sustain the truth in the recognizable form and the fact that we can see, hear and feel. Talk, preaching, writing and beliefs may do some good, but it is the absolute and indisputable facts that have given vigor and strength to our cause. If exertions were made to present to sensible American men and women the proof of spirit return, countless thousands would join our ranks and in time many of our churches would be turned into schools of scientific demonstration of the fact that when we leave these bodies we just begin to live. With the facts we already have, we will surely be able to produce, we could soon convince the so-called civilized portion of the human race that we do not die. I am aware that we are tending toward this conclusion.

What we need is the materialization of men and women whom we know to have left their bodies, to appear on our rostrums, in our camp-meetings, and in the streets of our cities, towns and villages in the recognizable form and the clothing they wore before they passed out of their bodies. We want those who have left their bodies, to return again in the homes they recently left and show that life is continuous. These things will come to pass before the next fifty years have passed, if materialization takes place in our houses, as we know it does now, why can't they materialize and appear at our meetings and even on our streets in daylight? Christ did it (so they say) three times after he was crucified, and it is probably true that he did. I have seen more than five hundred materialized forms, many of whom I knew as well as I know anybody.

I never waste any time trying to convince ordinary uneducated men or women, or church-members to join us. When they do join us they hang like barnacles on our great cause. What we want is the intellect of the world, great, good men and women, and we want to bring them to us, not by talk, but by facts, then they stay; they will be benefited and they will benefit the cause. WILSON MACDONALD.

LINES.

I roamed the wood, upon the hill,
Where the robin piped his lay,
While through the eyes the soul seem'd
Kissed
By the green hills far away.
Fair Spring, her flower-jewels rare
Then decked the landscape o'er,
But in my soul were scenes more fair,
Pictured from some brighter shore.
I thought of one true voice of yore,
Sweeter than harp-like tone;
But realms where spirits weep no more,
Had claimed her—for their own.
Hope to my soul came with a bound,
And my spirit sky grew clear,
E'en then I stood on hallowed ground,
For my angel friend drew near.
W. DUNCAN,
Council Bluffs, Iowa.

JUNE.

The morn'glight with rays of red,
Throws kisses to the violet's bed;
The tangle vines on trellis twine,
And over my doorway the columbine.
The green hills sparkle with twinkling
dew,
Where daisy-cups reflect the blue;
The brooklets in the vales below,
Wander by banks where mosses grow.
The bluebirds wing athwart the sky,
In dazzling flight, delight the eye;
A tinkling bell from the pasture lane
Flutters o'er the fields of ripening grain.
Thro' morn's gray aisles the sweetest
scent
Together with roses the air is blest,
And all the world with joy attuned,
A welcome gives to June.
BISHOP A. BEALS,
Summerland, Cal.

SPIRITUAL HOMES.

What They Are and Where to Find Them.

Spiritual homes are beautiful homes; though they be unknown to the gaudy decorations of wealth, of the palaces of the millionaires, of the houses of the moderately rich, the spiritual home is the home of love; the home of the unselfishness, of kindness, of truth and justice. Even those who live in rude huts may have the sweetest spiritual homes. Palaces are the outcome of great ambition for display, made possible by vast accumulations of wealth; they are the results of greed, vanity and selfish extravagance, and can be built by mechanics as places in which to live and entertain friends of the "smart set."

They may be, and often are utterly devoid of love in its highest and holiest sense; may be the homes of tyrants and slaves, licentiousness and tippling, cold and cruel, unmated married people; may be the very cesspools of darkness and degradation; they are often the abodes of Christians who rob the poor to give to the Lord. They may be the narrow ways to a life of wretchedness and woe. They may be the sacred sanctuaries of followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, who follows so far behind they lose sight of the real Jesus in spirit, and some of them, no doubt, are spiritual homes, but the real spiritual home is not built by hands, but by the true union of souls, by peace, harmony, and a love that knows no faltering, recognizes no obstacles, smooths over the rough places, subdues the angry passion, and attunes the human nerves to the delicate touch of the beautiful things of nature.

The spiritual homes have family circles, piano parlors, music and class literature, joy and sunshine, sublime aspirations and social tranquility. The spiritual homes are abodes for returning loved ones and resting-places for tired, loving, earthly ones. Soul retreats for weary human beings. Welcoming retreats for embodied, and freed spirits. Private heavens on earth.

In the spiritual home will be found spiritual literature of all descriptions; books, pamphlets and papers; an interest in all things spiritual; whether it be a hut or a palace, in construction, it must abound in spirituality; it must rest in the lap of peace and harmony and be forever coddled in the arms of love.

Cold and soulless greed; flattery, sordid vanity; diamonds and high-sounding phrases and paragraphs; blue blood and pedigree; titles and social popularity; an elegant form and the usual ambition to make it known; are not in the least conducive to spirituality, though some of these may be possessed and not destroy the higher spiritual natures of the members of the spiritual homes.

Spiritualists may have homes that are as far from spiritual as are the homes of those who know nothing of Spiritualism. But because this may be, it does not follow that the fact that true has no effect upon the fact that Spiritualists' homes are institutions where there should abide true spirituality.

The average human being, especially the male portion of the human race, has let avarice and acquisitiveness run to seed in his make-up. He has been born into the world with a yearning for gold and for all the luxuries of this life and no thought that there is a necessity for more than the necessities of life. He is filled with a longing to rise in wealth and station here with little thought for the comfort of others, except, perhaps, of those of his own household. Therefore, the very eyes he looks through see naught but the shining gold and the heights, financial or political, of this life. That is the goal.

The fact that we know there are those above us in intellect and goodness, from whom we expect kindly consideration and boundless compassion for our infirmities and weaknesses, and not their scorn and loathing ought to inspire us to extend to those beneath us precisely the same good feeling that we hope for from those above and beyond us.

However, we should do right because we know it is right, and not because we know it is right, or because with the act of right we hold in anticipation some future reward or remuneration. We should be true because we know that to be true is right. We should be charitable because we know that charity is right, not because we wish those above us to be charitable to us. We should be kind and forgiving and true to cause the error of others, not because we are imperfect and liable to err, and hope to be excused, but because it is right.

Human greed, its continuous growth upon and within the coming generations, is certainly the farthest from spirituality of any characteristic of man, and that is growing greater and stronger with each year's generation, speaks plainly of the unspiritual influence of the old creeds and dogmas.

Those conditions which make a millionaire of one with less than a hundred, and which another can obtain a livelihood, are not spiritual.

Gambling, forcing all business opponents out of business, equipping the poor to build high-priced colleges, etc., are not spiritual. We wish to see a man to succeed financially, if he achieves honestly. It is a duty to himself and family to make ample provision for the future, but a man cannot be selfish, deceptive, oppressive and tyrannical, jealous, licentious, etc., and hope to attain success by giving a few patsy dollars to some good cause, to the extent of escaping justice.

Justice is spiritual, and true spirituality upholds and sustains every just cause. DR. T. WILKINS.

Preserving the health by too strict a regimen is a wearisome malady.—Rochefoucauld.

Rulers always hate and suspect the next in succession.—Tacitus.

VIEW AND REVIEW.

Morris Pratt Institute and Other Spiritual Enterprises.

The Progressive Thinker of June 13 is noticeable for its practical presentation of different views upon questions of vital importance to the cause of Spiritualism. Secretary Longley's concise showing of the stable condition of the N. S. A. and the work it is steadily doing ought to be read at least once in every Sunday meeting of Spiritualists between the two oceans, as well as in week-day circles, seances and summer camps. The facts she marshals in column five on the first page are a complete answer to the covert antagonism often betrayed in the question, "What is the N. S. A. doing anyhow? Isn't its sole business merely to advertise and salary its officers?"

An organization is not bankrupt which has over fifteen thousand dollars in its treasury, unencumbered real estate worth as much more and no outstanding liabilities of serious amount. Its life is not lessened if it is sustaining able missionaries in the field, supporting needy mediums, distributing tracts, conducting from its central office voluminous correspondence and upholding an Editor-at-Large and a Superintendent of Lyceums.

Let us take these conditions privately and in public for the next three months. Many of our people do not read Spiritualist newspapers. Their ignorance of our supreme body is the channel through which selfish schemers arouse their opposition to it. The misunderstanding of some well-meaning people must be met and removed.

Mrs. Longley is unable to account for the frequent report that the N. S. A. is falling to pieces. We of Illinois are not falling to do so, and in the event that she here have steadily predicted the death of the N. S. A. from the hour of its birth, in 1893. Their wish is parent of the utterance. They do not like to have events force them into the role of discredited prophets when they had bid to be foremost in the "I told you so" class. Some of them are sored because they are not accepted at their own standard of self-protection. Others of them are by nature hostile to every work not originated and managed by themselves, forgetting that President Lincoln worried more over some lost miles than captured Brigadier Generals, because he could replace the latter with less difficulty. Officers can always be found, but true-spirited workers are rarer. In the same camp are the tricksters, always tireless in their own selfishness, and the earnest workers who are always ready to help.

Emphasize at every opportunity the fact that the N. S. A. at its last session took steps to effectively lessen inequalities of representation in its councils. Only remains for the state Association to complete this feature of our organic reforms by adopting a uniform basis of membership in each of them. Would there be a serious lack of funds for the support of needy mediums if we could, without hurting the finer sensibilities of our beneficiaries, be given to know their actual number, who they are, and their real needs? We too often glance at general appeals and accept them as perfunctory efforts on the part of their official officers. Individualize the needy cases and each one will discover interested helpers.

May not both the donations for support of mediums and the Morris Pratt Institute be lessened by the great struggle of recent years to raise the necessary funds to place the N. S. A. on its present substantial basis? That effort was a long continued and severe strain, and the results named should not be antagonistic to each other. The Spiritualists of the United States can sustain both when they will to do it. The work belongs to each one of us as well as to our rich brethren.

Denominational colleges are an important factor in present day education, notwithstanding the great universities supported by legislative and individual munificence. The completion of the curriculum of the smaller institutions has more and more become a power which counts for their tenets. Every convert becomes a minister to his or her own familiar circle. It would be narrow to measure the Morris Pratt Institute solely by the preachers of Spiritualism; it may turn out. The completion of its courses of instruction and more competent faculty, the greater will be its patronage. Narrow it to the development of mediumship for selfish gain and you destroy its great field of legitimate missionary usefulness.

Let us avoid narrowness of thought and niggardiness of donations towards a single one of our worthy enterprises. In one of the touch-and-go greetings of the last Chicago mass-meeting, Bro. E. W. Sprague spoke of the need of a carefully chosen systematic study course for individuals, highest neighborhood circles and lyceums. We are waiting for him to find time he can devote to an elaboration of that idea. Why not Chattanooga Spiritualism? GEO. B. WARNE.

How calmly we may submit ourselves to the hands of Him who bears up the world.—Richter.

Theologues are well in their place, but repentance and love must come before other experiences.—Beecher.

When a man dies they who survive him ask what property he has left behind. The angel who bends over the dying man asks what good deeds he has left behind him.—Mabius.

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HEATHENISM.

IT IS MANIFESTED IN THIS, THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.

A Young Girl Imprisoned by the Sisters of the Good Shepherd—The Curse of Catholicism in This Country.

We desire to lay before your readers [The Citizen, Boston], some of the details of the case of another escaped prisoner from the prison factory of Sisters of the Good Shepherd, in Louisville, Ky., and who is now under our care.

In Jessamine county of this state there lives a respectable farmer named Silas Aldridge, whose family consists of a wife and eight children, six daughters and two sons. Two of the daughters are married and both sons are of age. The family is Baptist, and most of them are members of that church. One of the daughters, Luella, the subject of this history, about a year and a half ago, when she was close to fifteen years of age, began receiving the attentions of a young man in the neighborhood, whose visits were not approved by her father. At length he was forbidden the house. Luella, however, like many another child, thought her father arbitrary and continued to receive the young man's attentions unknown to him.

At last, on the 21st day of July, 1902, the young man proposed that they run away and get married and Luella consented. Soon after they started, however, her treacherous companion induced her to drink some whiskey from a bottle which he carried, under the pretext that it would be good for a toothache of which she was complaining. Soon after taking it she became drowsy, then stupid; after that she does not remember what occurred until about five o'clock in the evening when she remembers getting off the train in Lexington and being arrested by a policeman.

She was then taken in hand by a Miss Taylor, a member of the Roman Catholic church who seemed to be in some kind of authority about Lexington. This woman took her to some house where she was kept till morning. Next morning the father learned of the escape, and was going to put her in a convent, and she could have her choice of Indianapolis, Cincinnati or Louisville; but, as it would be necessary to have a trial before going to either of the first-named places, she thought it would be better to go to Louisville. So putting her on the train, Miss Taylor brought Luella to Louisville and placed her in the convent of the Good Shepherd, saying to the nuns there as she did so, "Have received your card stating that you wanted girls for your convent, and here is one I have brought you"—telling the "Mother" at the same time not to let the girl's parents know where she was. They gave her the pious name of Bernadette, and she was set to work at once assorting laundry. To conceal her identity, words were given out among the nuns that she was a girl from Nashville. She wrote letters repeatedly to her sisters, and the nuns to whom she gave them said they were sent. Ascertaining, however, that they were deceiving her and not sending the letters, she became discouraged and quit trying to communicate with her people.

Naturally kind and affectionate, she soon became a docile prisoner, and Sister Bernadette, who had been her confidante, became much attached to her. There was good material in her not only for a Roman Catholic, but for a nun; so it was decided to send her outside to a zealous Romanist family to be instructed in the catechism.

Father McFarland, of Pewee Valley, a suburb of Louisville, took the case in hand and carried Bernadette to Henry county, where he put her in a Romanist family. The family named should not be antagonistic to each other. The Spiritualists of the United States can sustain both when they will to do it. The work belongs to each one of us as well as to our rich brethren.

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called in, attorneys sent for, and legal steps taken to secure her recovery even if the police should succeed for the time being in carrying her back. Luella's father was at once communicated with, and suit was begun in hen behalf for \$10,000 damages. The following is a copy of the letter received from her father:

Logans, Jessamine County, Ky., May —, 1902.
W. T. Burch—Dear Sir:—I received your kind letter informing me of my daughter's whereabouts. Her mother and myself feel most thankful to you for your information. We cannot express our thanks in words.

Luella Aldridge is our daughter's name. She is sixteen years of age. She disappeared from my house last July 21, and until the present time we have not been able to find any trace of her. I had almost given her up as dead, as I have searched everywhere I knew or thought she might be. If she had been arrested or imprisoned it has been done without my knowledge or consent, and together against my will. I was neither notified or consulted in the matter, I feel that I have been wronged, and I feel that she has been damaged, and I hereby give you full right to use my name as her father and guardian in the proceedings against the convent, and I advise you to make it lively for them. I have a home for her and plenty to support her. I will kindly ask you to advise her in the right direction. Thanking you for your information.
Yours truly,
SILAS R. ALDRIDGE.

We are not in the Middle Ages, nor are we in Russia, yet here a Protestant girl of good parentage, with father and mother anxious to look after and take care of her, is kidnapped, imprisoned at hard labor, and set to learning the Roman catechism under watch and control of a Roman priest!

But what is more still, is the bold defiance of the law these "good sisters," as some of our candidate judges, de-light to call them, and this "holy father" have shown in this case, as in others. The federal court is the only tribunal that can imprison a Kentuckian outside the state, but these tools of Rome can give their captives the choice of prison in other states, doubly in violation of the statutes of Kentucky. Section 1221 of these statutes plainly declares that any one imprisoning another without due process of law, or kidnapping and carrying another outside of the state, shall be deemed guilty of a felony, and confined at hard labor in the penitentiary for not less than one nor more than twenty years.

Thus these people who put themselves forward as guardians and trustees of the young, conservators of public morals, stand revealed as themselves felons under the law, trusting to an organized ecclesiastical boycott and to their influence with the courts, to keep out of the penitentiary.

Since the above was written it has been learned from good authority that a full description of Luella Aldridge has been placed on the police bulletins, and all of the police in the city have orders for her arrest.

WOMAN'S LIBERTY LEAGUE.
Mrs. K. C. Richardson, President,
Lillie E. Burch, Secretary.

Spiritualism and Skepticism.

I notice Bro. W. F. Jamieson has contributed a few comments if not criticisms upon my brief article concerning intelligent skepticism. Instead of confining himself to the questions I ask in my treatment of the subject and to the leading thought thereof, he rushes at once into a dissertation upon the subject and importance of skepticism. To refresh the reader's memory I will state that my questions were as follows:

1. My parents observed in November, 1833, a meteoric shower. I have never witnessed such a spectacle. Am I therefore to infer that my parents never did, but were mistaken, deluded, hypnotized, or in some way deceived by their own senses?

2. I have witnessed a genuine materialization. My description of it leaves no room for the most insignificant, technical, skeptical quibble. It cannot be explained in any other manner than that I am deliberately falsifying in making it, or that it is as true as I represent it. This is no place in my description where fraud could be even remotely suggested, notwithstanding the fact that it may be said that Robert Dale Owen was equally certain that he was not deceived in a case that finally proved to be one of deception. Owen's case does not prove my case one of the same character. Now, the question is, since my Christian, Materialistic, skeptical and agnostic friends have never witnessed a genuine materialization, must we therefore necessarily infer that I never witnessed one, but was mistaken, deluded, hypnotized, deceived by my own senses?

Now, I submit in all candor, that these questions are perfectly legitimate and can be answered by yes or no without giving us a dissertation upon skepticism, faith, knowledge, this year's on last year's facts, etc.

Who is objecting to skepticism? I certainly am not. I simply state the fact that skepticism is not always intelligent, and then ask two questions based upon that general proposition.

Skepticism, incredulity and theory are all important and necessary elements in the establishment of fact, and the prosecution of new discoveries. Who is objecting to either of them? Is not Brother Jamieson erecting a man of straw to play with?

In conclusion, I may say that it is not the more pronounced phenomena of Spiritualism alone, that have convinced me of the truth. Some of the most apparently insignificant and unexpected and unthought of tests—tests along the line of "little things" are fully as satisfactory.

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

This department is under the management of
HUDSON TUTTLE.

NOTE.—The Questions and Answers have called forth such a host of respondents, that to give all equal hearing compels the answers to be made in the most condensed form, and often in brevity. Proofs have to be omitted, and the style becomes thereby assertive, which of all things is to be deprecated. Correspondents often weary with waiting for the appearance of their questions and write letters of inquiry. The supply of matter is always plentiful, and the space given, and hence there is unavoidable delay. Every one has to wait his time and place, and all are treated with equal favor.

NOTICE.—No attention will be given to anonymous letters. Only name and address must be given, or the letters will not be read. If the request be made, the name will not be published. The correspondence of this department has become excessively large, especially letters of inquiry requesting private answers, and while I freely give whatever information I can, the courtesy of correspondence is expected.

HUDSON TUTTLE.
Woman's Rights: Q. Is Mrs. Julia Ward Howe yet active in reform work?
A. Although firm and strong for one 84 years of age, Mrs. Howe does not take the active part she did in former years. She was a power in the Abolition movement, and after the war, as ardently engaged in the cause of woman's suffrage. Although she has written three volumes of poetry, and many in prose on reform subjects, she is best known, and her name will be carried to the future by the one immortal poem given her by Longfellow. That poem will be quoted as long as the English language endures—"Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord," etc.

C. A. Muse: Q. I find the following item in a Texas paper: "My little boy, aged two years, while passing through the yard, laid a peculiar looking egg in a hen's nest. He took the egg to his mother, and this was what she saw, written on the egg in golden letters: 'Behold, the Lord cometh.' Judgment is at hand. Prepare to meet thy God.' These letters were not seen by the mother, but raised by the child, and could be easily felt. At least a hundred people will vouch for the truth of this statement." How is this phenomenon to be accounted for?

A. There yet remains a decreasing minority ignorant and superstitious; a larger number who retain enough superstition to be interested by such tales, and a yet larger number who are amused by such credulity. To cater to the tastes of all these varied classes is the policy of "enterprising" journalism. The publishers or editors do not care if the matter published be true or false, if it will bear scarce headlines. Down in Texas this egg story is taken seriously by the religiously inclined, especially the colored people. The eggs are to be seen, and there is no doubt about that. The "religiously inclined," white and colored, see in the faithful sentences on the eggs the hand of God. They believe a miraculous interposition has come to them, and hasten to prepare for the judgment.

To one who optimistically flatters himself that mankind progresses, and the age of religious credulity has passed, such childishness is discouraging. He will more clearly see that many a generation must pass before the lagging rear will be enlightened. That there is anything miraculous or extraordinary about these eggs is not a moment to be thought of. Similar instances have troubled the Adventists since the days of Miller the notorious prophet. When he was in his glory the Adventist papers announced the end of the world, was written on good, fresh poultry eggs. Men and women when they "shooed" off the birds and found eggs with sentences of doom, were driven to insanity! Ignorance and credulity go hand in hand. Whenever and wherever things are observed contrary to the laws of nature, they may be set down as tricks, and it is not necessary there be any other explanation of trickery, for the thing itself is all that is desired. It does not require any large amount of skill or cunning to prepare such eggs. The writing is done with oil and the egg dropped into vinegar, after a few hours it is removed, when it will be found that the acid has eaten away the shell, except where the oily ink has prevented.

The newspapers publish this story far and wide, and the rascal who prepared the eggs must be convulsed with laughter! When public journals thus prostitute their high offices to pandering to the morbid craving for the sensational, they cease to be educators, and become purveyors of garbage and trash.

W. H. Pelkey: Q. In controversy with a skeptic I have been told that seven years ago 10,000 men were put up by ten men in an Eastern state, to be given to any Spiritualist making any demonstration of their phenomena that could not be explained by psychology or duplicated by legions of men, and that this offer is still standing. Is this true?
A. A correspondent may rest assured that he has met an "orthodox" lie. As it is difficult to prove a negative, I can only affirm, that although constantly reading the spiritual journals and many leading cosmopolitan newspapers, I have never read such offer. Who are these ten men in the Eastern state? When did they make this offer, and where?

A smaller sum, we think \$100, was offered years ago, and may be standing yet, but imposing conditions such as would make manifestations impossible. If ten men should offer a photograph of the world \$10,000 to make a photograph that could not be taken by any other means, and then demand as a condition that a dark box or camera should not be used, it would be no more absurd than the conditions required by those who make these offers, not expecting they will be accepted, but for bluff and notoriety. The lie once started, goes from newspaper to newspaper, like a rich morsel rolled under the tongue of slander, added to as it travels, and may become a statement of fact in history!

A very orthodox evangelist, to give point to his attack of infidelity, said that Ingorsoll, crossing from England, met a terrible storm, and frightened out of his senses, went on his knees and begged God's mercy in prayer!

Fortunately Ingorsoll was alive and characterized the story as "an orthodox lie!" The story, however, is so valuable to be believed and will be repeated

and repeated in pulpits, where nothing is forgotten, and little learned anew.

Dr. E. G. Q. (1) Is the Christian theology founded on and identical with the solar mythology?

(2) Does sun worship explain the association of intoxicating or alcoholic liquor with religion?

A. The solar mythology was intimately connected with the religions of the ancients. Traced to their source the beliefs entertained of the gods and goddesses, were the fancies of the childhood of mankind, and these beliefs modified by changing circumstances and the growth of intelligence, were the basis of the ancient religions. There was strangely united with solar worship that of the generative principle in nature, and this phallic worship apparently came into existence contemporary with Christianity as a direct outgrowth of these preceding beliefs, absorbed and continued then under other names.

Apollo, the sun-god, became Christ, the son of God; Isis, the Mother of Heaven, became the Virgin Mary; the sacred twelve zodiacal signs represented the twelve apostles; the bisexual cross, and hence the symbol of immortality. It had been used thousands of years before the advent of Christ as representing the union of the two generative principles, male and female. It was so employed by the Egyptians, and is constantly found on the mummy cases, and is pictured in the hieroglyphs held in the hand of some of the goddesses. Afterwards, as it had gone before to all the sun-gods, it gave rise to the myth of a literal cross and crucifixion of the incarnate God thereon.

(2) The people, with whom original sin was the chief doctrine, and which the grape, and pressed the juice, which in the warm climate soon fermented and owing to the sweetness of the fruit became highly intoxicating. The blood-red liquid suggested to their fancy the blood of animals, and hence the offering of wine was substituted for the blood of sacrificed animals. Then when the drink is supposed to have a spirit which took possession and at times played the demon. Christ was fully imbued with this belief, and spoke of wine as representing his blood, and commentators have found evidence to support the dogma that this is not symbolical, but the blood of the priest or minister transforms it into the real blood. The introduction of wine at the Last Supper is a stock argument of inebriates, and has been a prolific cause of drunkenness.

It had not the same origin as the sun-myths, but formed a part with them.

NEW YORK STATE.

Sixth Annual Convention of the State Association.

The sixth annual convention of the New York State Association of Spiritualists was held in Syracuse, N. Y., Saturday and Sunday, May 29, 30 and 31, 1903, and was a fitting close to a very successful year's work. The entire board of officers and trustees were re-elected and is as follows: Harvey W. Richardson, President, East Aurora, N. Y.; Mrs. Carrie B. E. T. Twine, vice-president, Westfield, N. Y.; T. H. Tuttle, N. Y.; Reynolds, second vice-president, Troy, N. Y.; Herbert L. Whitney, secretary, Brooklyn, N. Y.; Mrs. Harriet M. Rathbun, treasurer, Mount Vernon, N. Y.; Mrs. Laura A. Holt, West Potsdam, N. Y.; E. G. Reilly, Syracuse, N. Y.; Miss Marie J. Fitz Maurice, New York City; Mrs. Harriet Duhl, Elmira, N. Y.

An amendment to the by-laws was passed, which is as follows: Resolved, that Article IX of the by-laws be amended by striking out the whole thereof, and substituting therefor the following: "The president of the New York State Association of Spiritualists shall represent the charter thereof as a delegate to the annual convention of the National Spiritualists Association, and the duty of each auxiliary society in good standing at the time of the last preceding convention of the N. Y. State Association of Spiritualists to elect at a duly called meeting of such society one delegate to the annual convention of the National Spiritualists Association, and such delegate to be elected and the report thereof be filed with the secretary of this association on or before August 1 of each year."

"In case of failure or neglect of any such auxiliary society to so elect and report such delegate on or before date named, it shall be the duty of the executive committee to appoint delegates for such delinquent societies."

"It shall be the duty of the president of this association to see that all the state is fully represented at the annual conventions of the National Spiritualists Association, and to appoint substitutes to fill vacancies should any occur."

The convention adopted the following unanimously, which was offered by the committee on resolutions: "Resolved, that the New York State Association of Spiritualists assembled at Syracuse, N. Y., May 29, 30 and 31, 1903, and his estimable wife, the loyal, tender sympathy which has filled our hearts ever since the sad news of their great bereavement was sent into numberless homes where they are beloved. May resignation born of hope in reunion bring the consolation which can only come through a knowledge of Spiritualism."

"That our prayer has arisen for the bereaved, that we have wept with the stricken parents in the loss of their beautiful child, the bright, sweet, winsome Xilla; that we will by our loyal support help our brother and sister to bravely bear this great bereavement. Resolved, that our benediction shall rest upon them and we hope they may soon be able to see the silver lining to the cloud of darkness around and about them."

Secretary Whitney introduced a motion that was passed at a meeting in Brooklyn asking the state association to take place for the bodies of our martyrs, Katie and Maggie Fox; after some discussion a motion prevailed to refer the entire matter to the N. S. A. and action be taken in accordance.

A short memorial service was held at commencement of the afternoon session on Saturday, as tribute to Decoration Day. Brief addresses were made on the subject by Mrs. C. E. S. Twine, Dr. Butterfield, Mr. H. L. Hanson, Birch Ellis, Mrs. T. U. Reynolds, Mrs. M. C. Von Kanzler and W. W. Kelsey.

The secretary read communications from Miss M. J. Fitz Maurice, New York City; Mrs. Ellen M. Oram, Niagara Falls; Frank Walker, Hamburg, and the Ohio State Association of Spiritualists.

Secretary Whitney spoke with great feeling on the sufferings and necessities of our old-time aged men, Mary O. of New York City, who for the last three years and over has lain on a bed of suffering; and moved that Sister Morrell be made an honorary member of the state association, which motion was adopted unanimously. A motion was adopted to take up a collection for Sister Morrell, which netted \$12.50.

A vote of thanks was given Sister M.

J. Fitz Maurice and her assistants for the good work accomplished in connection with the successful four days' mass-meeting in Brooklyn last March.

While waiting for the nominating committee to report, Mrs. H. Duhl, of Elmira, and "Ole" Walcott, and Miss Victoria C. Moore, of Dryden, read an humorous selection.

The following speakers took part in the evening exercises which were entirely devoted to musical and literary exercises and spirit messages: H. W. Richardson, Mrs. C. E. S. Twine, Mrs. T. U. Reynolds, Mrs. Elizabeth Brewer, Rev. Charles S. Hulbert, Mrs. Little, Mrs. M. E. Clark, Matthew Stephenson, Mrs. Nellie Benning, Miss Kate Woodruff, Mrs. Gertrude Mudge, Mrs. M. C. Von Kanzler, David Williams, Herbert L. Whitney.

The music under the direction of Prof. Marsh of Syracuse, was of exceptional merit.

Miss Victoria C. Moore, of Dryden, N. Y., our graceful and talented young elocutionist, read a number of choice and pleasing selections, in a way to win all hearts, even the Syracuse reporters, who were unimpaired in their praise of this beautiful and accomplished artist. Our medium, the Rev. Dr. Victor Wyldes, of Toronto, Canada, gave remarkable evidences of spirit power in his communications. Dr. Wyldes bids fair to soon be classed as one of our very best mediums.

Great credit is due the two local societies of Syracuse for their hearty cooperation in making our convention a grand success.

The hall and music were furnished by Brother Reilly and his societies.

The total receipts from all sources during the year ending May 29, 1903, are \$1,277.66; total disbursements are \$780.50.

Six new societies joined the association during the year, and the individual membership has been largely increased.

HERBERT L. WHITNEY,
Secretary.

65 Howard Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT.

To the New York State Association of Spiritualists:

In accepting the presidency of the New York State Association of Spiritualists, to which I was chosen at the last annual convention, I did so with much reluctance, knowing that with the multitudinous duties devolving upon me in other directions, which I could neither shake off nor lay aside, I should be handicapped for time to do the things which seemed to me so essential to be done by one in this position. But I promised to do the best I could, and the limited time at my disposal, and the results are such as they are.

I am glad to be able to say that the year has been one of progress, and that we have grown as an organized body.

That we have increased the number of local auxiliary societies, as well as the individual memberships.

That we have outstanding debts, and sufficient funds in the treasury for immediate current needs. And furthermore, I believe our cause has a little firmer hold upon the minds of the people of the Empire State, and that the prejudices against Spiritualism and Spiritualists are not as pronounced as when I was elected.

And while this is gratifying, I realize that the progress in each of these directions should have been much greater, and would have been had all Spiritualists in the state given the organized effort that co-operation and liberal support which the importance of the movement commands and for which I sincerely hope and trust that the incoming board of trustees will receive such liberal support and co-operation as will enable them to increase the scope and efficiency of organized state work.

Mid-Year Board Meeting.

At the time of the last convention provision was made for holding a mid-year board meeting, in the autumn of 1902, but as that time approached a careful canvass through correspondence revealed a general feeling among the trustees that such a meeting was especially necessary, hence no call was issued.

However, since a sufficient number of the trustees for a quorum of the board were in attendance at the National Spiritualists convention held in Boston, in October, also in Brooklyn, at the time of the Brooklyn mass-meeting, last March, we met on each of these occasions and acted on certain matters which are since confirmed at a regularly called board meeting. Another year matters may be very different, but as things were this year, we met in action, which was in the interest of economy, was the wisest course.

I would recommend that this matter of board meetings be left with the officers, who have ample powers under the by-laws, and the state statutes.

Medical Legislation.

In so far as has come to my knowledge, no serious attempt has been made by the legislature of the state of New York, during the last year, to pass laws aimed especially at mediumship, in any of its phases, and we have no doubt concluded that the vigorous defense of the rights of Spiritualism and Spiritualists, made by the officers of the state association before the law-makers of the state during the session of 1901, was productive of healthy results, the influence of which still continues.

In that battle for religious and medical liberty the power of organization as a weapon of defense on the part of the parent that it would seem that all Spiritualists over the state would support and become a part of the organized movement, for this reason alone if for no other.

The recent attempt to pass a drastic vaccination law and more firmly to trench the medical monopoly of the state, was an outrage upon every citizen of this commonwealth. While it was not acted on our special religion, all Spiritualists over the state should be deeply interested in the defeat of the bill, and were quick to sign the petitions and protests that poured in upon the senators and assemblymen, urging that they oppose the measure.

The stronger we make our organized Spiritualist movement the more secure will we be in the enjoyment of those God-given rights. Let us be ready to stand up for our rights as citizens, and that if we are to have the coming generations that degree of medical and religious freedom which we desire for ourselves, we must meet the monopolistic tendencies of the medical societies with a strong organization.

We must not suppose these matters are permanently settled. They are likely to come up at any time, and much more likely to succeed if we fail to maintain a strong, healthy organization.

Registration of Spiritualists.

I made something of an attempt to secure the registry of the avowed Spiritualists of the state, but was only partially successful in the attempt, partly owing to the lack of time to follow up the work, and partly for lack of co-operation by many to whom I wrote and requested to assist me. To those who did so nobly respond, you have my sincere thanks.

I hope the incoming officers will take this matter up, and try to secure the

same and full address of all pronounced Spiritualists over the state.

Such a registry will be useful in many ways in connection with a thorough system of state work, and would be especially useful to the state association, to again cross swords in defense of medical liberty. I trust this convention will take some action concerning this matter.

Delegates to National Convention.

At the last annual convention of the National Spiritualists Association, its constitution was amended by adding to Article 6, Section 1, the following: "State associations having exclusive jurisdiction shall be entitled to representation in the N. S. A. Convention, of one delegate for each charter granted by its subordinate societies, in good standing at its last convention; provided that such societies as belong to both the state association and to the National Spiritualists Association, shall be entitled to representation on one basis only, that society to elect upon which the will be determined."

This provision for an increase of representation in the N. S. A. conventions by subordinate state associations was essential as a matter of fairness, and our delegates to that convention joined hands with others and worked zealously to secure a satisfactory result.

This increased representation gives us an increased influence in molding the organized movement over the nation, and brings us in closer touch with the other states, and the work they are doing. And if each society be empowered to name its delegates, as I assume provision will be made by the time then, each individual society will have practically the same advantages of direct representation in both state and National conventions, as they have heretofore had by keeping up their membership in both.

The amended constitution was further mentioned in Art. 7, Sec. 1, relating to "Means of raising revenue," by adding the following: "By collections at least once each year from all subordinate societies chartered by state associations." "By collecting annual dues of \$2 for each society in good standing when such state associations are chartered by the National Spiritualists Association."

From this it will be seen that each society belonging to this state association will be expected to take one collection annually for the N. S. A., besides, I assume that provisions will be made for each society to contribute to pay its \$2 dues required by the N. S. A.

I recommend that our by-laws be amended by providing for the naming of delegates, and the paying of dues to the N. S. A., by each subordinate society, or in such other equitable manner as may be just to such societies.

Mass-meetings.

At the last convention a resolution passed directing the trustees to arrange for holding mass-meetings in several parts of the state, and in accordance therewith, three such meetings have been held; one at Buffalo, one at Rochester, and one in the city of Brooklyn.

Owing to adverse conditions the Rochester meeting was not as successful as we had hoped. We encountered there the small-pox scare, which was then at its zenith, and which of itself was a wet blanket on our efforts. But here this we were confronted with the worst blizzard of the winter; so severe that the street car service was practically tied up for one whole day, and seriously interfered with during the remainder of the time. The results were small attendance, and a financial deficit. The thanks of the association, however, are due to the kindly assistance and co-operation of Mrs. Joslyn and Mr. Sissen, in making arrangements and in carrying out much of the detail work relating to this meeting.

The Buffalo meeting was held under the joint auspices of the First Spiritualist Church of Buffalo, and the state association, and was a success both in the attendance and financially, resulting in a neat balance for the credit of the state treasury. Thanks to the First Spiritualist Society and its efficient workers for their loyal co-operation.

The Brooklyn meeting was most successful of all. The attendance was good, and after defraying all expenses, upwards of \$100 was netted for the state treasury, and best of all, charters were issued to two new societies in Brooklyn during that week.

We as an association are largely in debt to the local past and present New York societies, who very generously contributed their services, and worked faithfully in every way to make the meeting the success which it was.

Our state officers are also entitled to much credit for the sacrifices they have made and the efforts they have put forth in connection with the mass-meetings.

I believe the holding of state association mass-meetings in the larger towns and cities is a legitimate and important feature of state work. They tend to re-awaken the interest of the Spiritualists and bring them into closer contact with the leading religious and philosophical work of the present age, we must look out for the children. Parents should be urged to send them to the lyceums, or better still, go with them in person. The children should be shown that we are in earnest in what we profess, and that Spiritualism and Spiritualists are as much respected as are other religious movements.

We are now being judged by our lives rather than by the complexity of our belief, hence it is for us to place our religion upon that pedestal which shall command the respect of our fellow-citizens.

If we believe Spiritualism to be the best religion, then let us prove it to the world by establishing and supporting our Sunday-schools and lyceums. The National Association has established a lyceum bureau under the management of Brother John W. Ring. Let us get in touch with Brother Ring, and build up our lyceum.

I hope the delegates to this convention may be inspired that they may devise ways and means to awaken our people to this crying need in this direction, and that in this feature of our work, progress may be made.

Other Reforms.

Spiritualists are, as a rule, reformers, hence it is not a surprising thing that most of our people believe in equal rights, and can join hands with any and every reform movement that is founded upon justice, and tends to the uplifting of the people. Hence our Spiritualists, the coming age resolutions, should deal with the question of woman's suffrage and express to the people of this state our sympathy with its workers.

Universal Brotherhood.

As a rule they sympathize with the oppressed whenever and wherever they are found, and with great reason. Temperance worker, Frances E. Willard, we feel that the spirit of extreme commercialism which, like the juggernaut car, crushes and bruises human hearts, and drives so many of our young women to despair and worse, and crime, must soon give way and make room for an economic and industrial system founded upon equality of opportunity, and whose chief corner-stone shall be universal brotherhood.

I trust that the committee on resolutions will deal with these subjects, and our members have tried to render efficient service to the cause, and to the state association, and I have no reason to criticize my associate trustees in any way, and yet with the growth of our movement, and the larger interest in

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be laid upon this rather than upon gathering funds from weak, struggling societies and groups of workers, and while we expected these societies and groups of workers to contribute toward defraying the expenses incident to the meetings being held, we did not deem it wise to be over-exacting in this direction, hoping to leave the society or group of workers stronger financially as well as otherwise for our coming among them.

We believe this has proven the wiser policy, and would recommend its continuance.

We were handicapped in this branch of our work by lack of funds, and I would recommend that a special missionary fund be established, and that those who desire to make donations be used only in this direction, will have the opportunity of doing so. And I hope that liberal donations may then flow into the treasury, so that the incoming board may not be handicapped in their missionary work for lack of funds.

There are hundreds of small towns and hamlets over the state wherein Spiritualist meetings have been unknown for years, and there are thousands of men and women who know practically nothing of Spiritualism, and other thousands who have only the most perverted conception of what Spiritualism really stands for, and instead of only one missionary for only a portion of the year, I wish it might be several of them during the entire year.

I have refrained from giving details of this branch of the work, assuming that our missionary will in his report, give full information in relation thereto.

Camp-meetings.

One feature of missionary effort is that of camp-meeting work. Last camp season we were assigned a state day at Freeville, at which Mrs. Reynolds and myself represented the state association. We received a cordial welcome from the audiences as well as from the management.

We have several individual members in that part of the state who renewed their memberships, and several new members united under the state banner. As a result of state day, we feel that the organized movement is better understood and appreciated, and financially there were a few dollars netted to the state treasury.

At Lily Dale we were assigned one session, at which I was asked to preside, and was assisted by Mrs. Twine and Mrs. Reilly, and we presented the claims of the state association as well as the organized movement generally, to a large and appreciative audience. And we hope in the near future to issue a state charter to this flourishing camp, and to Freeville camp, as we have already issued one to the Collins camp.

The North Collins Camp Association is one of the oldest, if not the very oldest Spiritualist society in this country, and has held meetings for nearly half a century, each June and autumn, under the name, "The Friends of Human Progress." In taking a chart of the state association, and the presented the claims of the state association as well as the organized movement generally, to a large and appreciative audience. And we hope in the near future to issue a state charter to this flourishing camp, and to Freeville camp, as we have already issued one to the Collins camp.

Ordination.
The subject of ordination is one that should have most careful consideration. The New York State Association has always been conservative in this matter, and has exercised great care in the selection of ministers to go forth under its authority to preach the gospel of Spiritualism.

The rule that applications for ordination lie on the table for one year was adopted as a conservative measure; and while it may best serve the interests of our cause to suspend this rule in certain special cases, the rule is undoubtedly a wise one, and will, I trust, continue as the general guide of the board of trustees on this all-important subject.

Children's Lyceums.

This is one of the most sadly neglected features of our movement. If we wish our spiritualism to become the leading religious and philosophical work of the present age, we must look out for the children. Parents should be urged to send them to the lyceums, or better still, go with them in person. The children should be shown that we are in earnest in what we profess, and that Spiritualism and Spiritualists are as much respected as are other religious movements.

We are now being judged by our lives rather than by the complexity of our belief, hence it is for us to place our religion upon that pedestal which shall command the respect of our fellow-citizens.

If we believe Spiritualism to be the best religion, then let us prove it to the world by establishing and supporting our Sunday-schools and lyceums. The National Association has established a lyceum bureau under the management of Brother John W. Ring. Let us get in touch with Brother Ring, and build up our lyceum.

I hope the delegates to this convention may be inspired that they may devise ways and means to awaken our people to this crying need in this direction, and that in this feature of our work, progress may be made.

Other Reforms.

Spiritualists are, as a rule, reformers, hence it is not a surprising thing that most of our people believe in equal rights, and can join hands with any and every reform movement that is founded upon justice, and tends to the uplifting of the people. Hence our Spiritualists, the coming age resolutions, should deal with the question of woman's suffrage and express to the people of this state our sympathy with its workers.

Universal Brotherhood.

As a rule they sympathize with the oppressed whenever and wherever they are found, and with great reason. Temperance worker, Frances E. Willard, we feel that the spirit of extreme commercialism which, like the juggernaut car, crushes and bruises human hearts, and drives so many of our young women to despair and worse, and crime, must soon give way and make room for an economic and industrial system founded upon equality of opportunity, and whose chief corner-stone shall be universal brotherhood.

I trust that the committee on resolutions will deal with these subjects, and our members have tried to render efficient service to the cause, and to the state association, and I have no reason to criticize my associate trustees in any way, and yet with the growth of our movement, and the larger interest in

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the teachings of Spiritualism, I am inclined to think a more active policy for the coming year would be wise.

Organization.

In uniting as an organized body Spiritualists are adopting the methods and using the implements of this day and age.

Modern civilization is teeming with organizations. In every department of life, whether it be industrial, social, political or religious, we see companies, societies, clubs and churches conducting their affairs under thoroughly organized movements.

It is the machinery whereby a large number of persons, in widely scattered localities can effectively express themselves, for the accomplishment of one general purpose. And if we expect to promote the growth of our movement and thoroughly establish Spiritualism as a religious movement, we must avail ourselves of the power of organization. I urge upon the delegates to this convention and through them, their constituents and friends at home, that strenuous efforts be made to increase memberships in local societies and individual memberships to the state association, thus rounding out and

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SATURDAY, JUNE 20, 1903.

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All books advertised in the columns of The Progressive Thinker are for sale at this office. Bear this in mind.

HUDSON TUTTLE.

Editor-at-Large for the National Spiritualist Association.

Mr. Tuttle has been engaged to answer all attacks in the secular or religious press on Spiritualism. Send him clippings when an attack is made, giving date and name of paper. Address him at Berlin Heights, Ohio.

ANNOUNCEMENT TO THE PUBLIC.

All money in donations or collections intended for the N. S. A. Mediums' Home or Relief Fund, should be sent to this office to the secretary. In fact, all money paid to our authorized missionaries, who can show a missionary certificate of later date than October, 1902. No other is authorized to collect money for this association. Contributions, large or small, are gratefully received.

MARY T. LONGLEY,
N. S. A. Secretary,
600 Pennsylvania Avenue S. E., Washington, D. C.

ZURILDA WELLINGTON.

Or Life in Two Worlds.

The above is the title of a message from the spirit side of life, through the mediumship of Mrs. Pasquer Curran, of St. Louis, Mo. Emanating, as it does, from the spirit side of life, it will prove especially interesting. Everybody should read it.

Brother Barrett Declines.

It hardly seems possible that the National Spiritualists Association was organized ten years ago, but September 27, 28, and 29, 1893 were the eventful days. On the 27th, at the hour of 12.40 p. m., Milan C. Edson, of Washington, D. C., called the convention to order, and as a formal opening, read the original call, and was elected temporary chairman, and on the same day, late in the afternoon, Harrison D. Barrett was elected permanent chairman. That gave the convention some knowledge of his executive ability and understanding of parliamentary usages. In fact, the convention wasn't long in deciding upon Mr. Barrett for president of the National Association.

Those who had hoped to see Mr. Edson chosen for the place were disappointed, of course, but eventually were made to see that Mr. Barrett was the right man, and from that day to this Mr. Barrett has succeeded himself, as though it were a stock company and he owned the bulk of the stock. In reality it was a stock company, with Spiritualism as its capital stock, and all Spiritualists as stockholders, and it certainly goes without saying that Mr. Barrett gave good satisfaction to those who took interest enough in the institution to become members and attend the conventions, and his unanimous choice each time told the tale of his worth and its appreciation in the capacity of president.

He has been an energetic executive, performing missionary work all over the country, organizing auxiliary societies and state associations, and pushing Spiritualism to the front as no one but the recognized head of the National Association and a man of remarkable tact and ability could.

His indomitable will and his sincerity, eye, his love for the cause has made him throw his soul and whole physical force into the work, often to the depletion and almost total collapse of the latter.

But his great sacrifice was telling upon his nerves and when the sudden shock of the death by accident of his precious little Xilla came his system gave way. His wife was an invalid previous to this, and the shock also increased her condition.

With this condition upon them they were ordered by their physician to retire from active work entirely, and since then have been in seclusion from the spiritual world.

In his paper last week, we read between the lines that although as much interested as ever in the cause, he has sacrificed quite enough as executive head for a short time, and that he has been able to get enough of the support of the cause they claim to cherish.

Mr. Barrett has been a fearless and honest officer of the N. S. A., and those who knew him most intimately in this capacity knew him but to love him.

We have always had the very warmest personal feeling for the brother, but at the same time have advocated the propriety of changing officers of this institution occasionally, for the good of the overworked officer and the over-credulous public.

Now is a good time for casting about for new timber for an executive head for the N. S. A. Who will it be?

Brother Barrett deserves the love and good will of the Spiritualists of the whole country, and for them as their representative, The Progressive Thinker extends to him their perfect gratitude and wishes for his future good health, prosperity and happiness, and for itself the high esteem this paper has ever held, it here offers without reserve to Brother Barrett.

The Episcopal Show.

The Right Rev. Charles C. Grafton, Bishop of Fond du Lac, has an article in Munsey, which is suggestive as a straw showing the set of the current in the ranks of the Episcopal church. The "Right Rev." is for high mass and all the humbug of the Catholic church. He begins with "God is a Ritualist." How he knows or has become so intimate with God, he fails to inform his readers. But as God is a Ritualist, it follows that the more ritual the better, until religion is all ritual. There is a fine engraving of the "Right Rev." in illustration with his robes and lace-trimmed sleeves. His heavy, smooth-shaven face above this feminine vestiture has an odd and ludicrous appearance. Why it is not red with shame is a mystery.

There is also an illustration of the church dignitaries marching on occasion of the opening of a general convention. A score or more of these "high functionaries," and priests, appear in a "snap shot," and to see their feminine costumes surmounted with the shaggy heads of middle-aged men, is intensely ludicrous. The funniest pictures are those heads of the English church, Archbishop Temple and Archbishop MacLagan, in all their high toggery, in which they appeared at the coronation of Edward VII. The embroidery on their robes is stunning. The face of Archbishop Temple reminds of Armour, that of a well-conditioned butcher; that of York, of a weak old man who if he engaged in any honest business would not look further than a popcorn or peanut stand.

The Right Rev. Grafton introduces a fine bit of historical writing in making it appear that Christ sanctions ritualism. It is true Jesus did not at any time appear in gorgeous gold-embroidered robes, belaced and befoiled, but "he was only laying the foundations." He said to his apostles, "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot hear them now. How be it when the spirit of truth shall come, he shall lead you into all truth." In other words, Jesus left the regalia part to be worked up by the priests, and even now divine inspiration is active in devising embellishments of this worship of one who wore a fisherman's tunic, and was as soulless as Jerry Simpson.

Perhaps the most amazing sentence to the general reader, is this: "Every part of the ritualistic service, as it is called, is full of meaning—nothing is done for show." The meaning, prevailing opinion, that the whole theatrical exhibit of the church is for show. Of course every part has a mystic meaning, and is symbolic, but the worshiping crowd have little thought awakened by this symbolism. It is with them the mummery of prescribed forms. The cut of the garments of the priests have meaning; the position taken during the service, every gesture may have significance as symbolizing truth, but the worshipers who are going through the genuflections, will not observe whether the priests stand facing the east or the west, toe in, or toe out, or how many candles are burning before the altar.

The "Right Rev." is right in saying mankind like display. This is true. Men like to join secret societies, and have "Lord High Churchmen of Oriental Flunkeydom" attached to their names, and appear on parade in gold-bespangled suits, and ostrich plumes streaming from their fierce headgear. They are amused by the church becoming a theatre. It is amusing to see great strong men in garments like woman's, but without the grace and taste of such clothing. Amusing to see a lot of choir boys dressed like girls, and trying to imitate the emaculate voices of the degraded class who are kept in oriental harems.

Are we to take this humbug, the raising of the host, the lighting of the candles, the singing boys, the befoiled priests, the singing, the intoning, the marching in procession, the mumbling of prayers, as religion? Are these of benefit, in cultivating morality and the spiritual nature?

The advocacy of ritualism, of these dead forms, is a strange step backward. Even the Methodists, who in the beginning were so lowly, the sisters wear a flower on the bonnet, or a sentimental ribbon, are drifting in this direction. The tendency of the leaders of thought has been toward the casting aside of symbolism, forms, ceremonies, and adherence to the plain statement of truth. The Protestant church set out in this direction. There appears, however, to be a reaction all along the line, and a return to the methods the Catholics have adhered to, because experience has taught them that they hold the ignorant masses by the hand, and the mystery with which they envelop their system. The masses want show and not religion, and the priests give them what they want.

Hot and Cold at the Same Breath.

Edgar Saltus, in the Chicago American, has a brief article on what he facetiously calls "The Spook Congress," held in Brooklyn. Having thrown out this sop to the public, that they may be sure he is not on the "spook" side, and not to be classed with the Spiritualist crowd, he gives himself away in the following manner:

"Yes, indeed. It is probable that our descendants will look back upon us not as we look back on the monera, but as we do regard the ape. To us the ape is embryonic, rudimentary, absurd. So, no doubt, ages hence shall we appear to future man. By that time spook congresses will not be derided; they will be out of date. For precisely as we have developed certain faculties, so shall humanity be to develop more. Among them clairaudience and clairvoyance, perhaps, for these faculties are as potential within us as sight and hearing were potential in the monera that could neither see nor hear."

This is a specimen of blowing hot and cold at the same time, and denying and affirming so as to leave the reader bewildered in attempting to find what the writer is at! But to this strongly affirm that man is endowed with the faculty of spirit-seeing and spirit-hearing is a brave step toward a full reception of Spiritualism.

"Continuity of Life a Cosmic Truth." By Prof. W. H. Bach. The work of a strong logical thinker, on a deeply important subject. Price, cloth, \$1.

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"The Truth Seeker Collection of Forms and Ceremonies for the Use of Liberals." For sale at this office. Price 25 cents.

How the Priest Became a Protestant.

The cause of Father Chiniquy's leaving the Catholic church is told by himself substantially as follows:

He wrote his submission to O'Regan's successor, Bishop Smith of Dubuque, promising to obey the authority of the church according to the words and commandments of God, as we find them expressed in the Gospel of Christ. The unsuspecting bishop accepted the submission, saying, "How happy I am to see this submission. How happy the pope and all his bishops in the United States will be to hear it, for we feared that both you and your people would separate from the church by refusing to submit to her authority."

Chiniquy promised to be a more faithful priest than ever and all was peace between him and his church. But by and by a critical Jesuit eye discovered that the submission was not what the church required. Chiniquy was summoned to Dubuque to see the bishop, and the following dialogue ensued:

"Have you the testimonial letter I addressed you?"

"Yes, my lord."

"Please show it to me."

"With pleasure; here it is."

The bishop took it and threw it into the stove. Chiniquy tried to save it from the flames but it was too late. He then said:

"How can you take from me a document which is my property and destroy it without my permission?"

"I am your superior and have no account to give you."

"Yes, my lord, you are a bishop and I a poor priest, but there is a God in heaven who is much above you as he is above me, and in the presence of God I protest against this iniquity."

"Have you come here to lecture me?"

"No, my lord, I have come at your command, but I want to know if it is to insult me, as you have done, that you requested me to come here again?"

"I ordered you to come here again because you deceived me the last time you came here. You gave me an act of submission that you know very well is not an act of submission. I accepted it. I reject it to-day."

"How can you say I deceived you? The document was written in good plain English. Is there on your table, if you were deceived, it was by yourself. Read it."

"What do you mean, Mr. Chiniquy, by the words, 'We submit ourselves to your authority according to the word of God as we find it in the gospel of Christ'?"

"I mean what you see there, that neither I nor my people will ever submit ourselves to anybody except according to the eternal laws of truth, justice and holiness, as we find them expressed in the Bible."

"Such language is sheer Protestantism. I cannot accept such a conditional submission. Give me one in which you simply say you will submit yourselves to my authority, and promise to do anything I bid you."

"That would not be an act of submission, but of adoration. I do absolutely refuse to give it."

"Then you can no longer be a Roman Catholic priest."

"May God Almighty be forever blessed."

Father Chiniquy returned to St. Anne, where, on the next Sunday he narrated the facts to his congregation in a sermon two hours in length, at the conclusion of which every one of the thousand persons present signified their intention of quitting the church of Rome by rising up. That was in 1858, and ex-priest Chiniquy claims to have made 35,000 converts from Romanism to Protestantism, chiefly through the reading of the authorized Catholic version of the Bible.

Revised—The Cruel Creed.

At the assembly lately held by the Presbyterian church, the article on infant depravity and damnation was stricken out. It has been a bone of contention for some years, the younger and more sensitive generation being ashamed of the depravity of their creed! The majority of the old mossbacks have been against any change, but slowly the protestation has grown louder, until at last progress is triumphant.

After the vote, it is reported that a minister said in explanation, that the church had not shifted or changed its foundations; it was the same in belief as it had been since its beginning! It is most advantageous to make one's self believe that defeat is victory, and be able to crow over the success of an adversary!

And now the deed is done, we cannot help thinking what suffering the infamous belief has done in its time. What utter depravity, or perhaps better, blight of superstition the belief indicated! What suffering it has caused! Mothers weeping in grief that could not be soothed, because hopeless over the eternal punishment of children dying without baptism. As though the sprinkling of an unthinking infant by a minister, would send it from hell to heaven!

Nor can we help thinking what the result would be if a majority of these Presbyterian ministers had voted the other way. Have infants been damned up to the moment of this vote? Are they now saved? Or has the creed been wrong, and infants been going to heaven? The church leaders have contended that the Bible proved this part of their creed. Now they say it does not. If this article has been entirely unsupported, and no one discovered it until they were enlightened by knowledge gained outside the bible, who knows but a little more knowledge will show other articles of the Confession of Faith as unsupportable and false?

The devil has gone to limbo.

Hell vanished like a night-mare dream.

Heaven become more inhabitable. Cruelty stricken from the creed. Conduct of life made more than belief.

Impelled by the inevitable spirit of the age the church is pushed onward! Let us be thankful that the Presbyterian ministers no longer blaspheme the name of God, by claiming to believe he has paved hell with the skulls of infants not a span long!

THE SECRET.

Softly the little wind goes by.

A whisper—nothing more!

Some message from the azure sky

Brought down to earth's green door.

Fragrant and fresh the wonder-word,

But what it means, who knows?

Only the butterfly, the bird,

The leaf, the grass, and rose.

Theirs the divine felicity—

The gift of wisdom rare—

The melody, the mystery,

The secret in the air.

—Frank Dempster Sherman.

MORRIS PRATT INSTITUTE.

Its Claims Are Analyzed by Various Minds.

"IMPORTANT QUESTIONS."

Views of the Secretary of the National Spiritualists Association.

To the Editor and Constituents of The Progressive Thinker—Esteemed Co-Workers and Friends:—In The Progressive Thinker of June 13, a series of Editorial questions upon important subjects appears upon the first page. The officers of the N. S. A. are requested to answer the same. I trust that the N. S. A. president and other officers and prominent workers in the N. S. A. will respond with the able pens of these queries, as no doubt many of them will. As for myself, I am not writing these lines in any official capacity, and I distinctly state that, as the secretary of the N. S. A., I prefer to remain silent for the present on this subject; but as a long-time medium and active worker in the cause of Spiritualism, and as a member of one of the foremost chartered societies of the National Association, my views individually upon the questions propounded by our good Brother Francis, may perhaps find a place in the multitude of answers that The Progressive Thinker may be flooded with upon this important subject—namely, of the need and place for a spiritual college, such as the Morris Pratt Institute. Individually I have not been strongly impressed with the great necessity of establishing the college, hence have not personally contributed towards it. As a member of the N. S. A. board I voted in favor of the association donating the three hundred dollars it gave to the Morris Pratt College last year; since then, as a member of the N. S. A. board, I have not voted for any further contribution to the school. I believe in clearly defining my position, since I must speak to the point in expressing my views, or not at all.

Now, then, Editor Francis pertinently and opportunely asks, if the Spiritualists should be called upon to support a school where many of the branches might be found far better in the public schools and colleges throughout the country—said schools being non-sectarian, as we know they are. Emphatically, I personally answer No, to this query, for I do not see the importance of Spiritualists sustaining any school.

Should Spiritualists be asked to pay for teaching physical culture, etc.? Why should they? We can all practice physical culture daily if we choose, and purchase direct editions of magazines and papers devoted to such culture that will give us all necessary instruction on the theme.

Should Spiritualists be called upon to aid in the study of Bible exegesis? I think not, especially as our best writers and speakers on the subject, like my venerable friend, Moses Hull, have given ample literature to the world in explanation of the Bible and its claims.

It is not necessary to educate a large class of students as mediums and speakers for the platform when we have our veteran workers, cultured, refined, logical, and eloquent, who are vainly seeking remunerative employment? If the question were not so serious it would be absurd! Can any college do better for Spiritualism than Hudson Tuttle, Moses Hull, Lyman C. Howe, J. Clegg Wright, Geo. A. Fuller, Prof. Lockwood, Mrs. Richmond, Mrs. Russegg, Sarah Byrnes, Juliette Year, Louise Harlow, and hundreds of others, heaven-inspired, eloquent, earnest, self-sacrificing, noble—are doing on the platform when they can get the opportunity and anywhere near a proper compensation? Yet most of these are self-educated, or have been instructed by their helpers and guides of the grander spheres.

The other questions I might answer in a similar vein to the foregoing. I stand for the HOME CIRCLE. I believe it has been the foundation of most of the very best teaching, blessing and phenomena that Spiritualism has given to the world, and with it, and the aids which well-written, cheap instructions for holding circles and developing mediumship, like those of Tuttle, Bach, Emma Hardinge Britten and Wallis, give to the students, classes in psychic unfoldment and training are no more needed now than they were in the petted days of early Spiritualism and its noble mediumship.

I have only the kindest thought and best wishes for the happiness of every teacher and worker in the Morris Pratt School, but I do not think the report of the year, with its dozen pupils showed that the college is needed or even wanted by more than a handful of Spiritualists.

I also believe that any sensitive or medium who wishes to improve in grammar, rhetoric or deportment can do so without the necessity of attending college, and that many of them, by studying, taking observations and training self along the proper line for unfoldment, all the while attracting willing and able helpers from both sides of life. As for the would-be public workers who are illiterate and glory in their crudeness, they will not give time or thought to college work; they are too intent on making the dollar, or in trying to build up their evanescent fame to care "whether school keeps or not."

Much more might be said on this important subject, but others will be heard from and I must not encroach upon their space, nor on the patience of our long-suffering editor, to whom I am indebted for many courtesies.

As to maintaining mediums' homes, I am in favor of doing for the needy mediums all that we possibly can in their time of adversity, or encroaching age. As I believe in the National government recognizing the hardship which the veteran underwriter in defense of the country and its needs, and as I do not think that any pension that goes into the home of the aged or disabled soldier can be other than well spent, so I believe that every dollar we put out for our aged and needy mediums, to add to their care and comfort is well spent, and that it is the crime of Spiritualists that they do not more generally respond to the call to sustain mediums' homes, or to help pension the worthy mediums who have done so much for Spiritualism and for humanity.

In the same issue of The Progressive Thinker in which the questions of the editor appear, is a letter from our esteemed brother, Moses Hull, in behalf of the Morris Pratt College. I do not wonder he is earnest in this matter. I do not doubt his heart and soul are in the college; he has witnessed beneath the expressions of many of the crude illiterates who have essayed to give instructions from the spirit world. We have all had to do much winning in this line, but I do not alter the fact that those who are the offenders against good English and the rules of rhetoric, are in the main those who hold colleges

and college people in contempt. But I can understand Brother Hull's position and sympathize with him. My reference to his feeling article just here is to mention the extravagant claims, which he considers of the early Spiritualists that there are or were in the past years from eleven to fifteen million Spiritualists in this country. Quoting from the World's Almanac, from a statement given its editor by Harrison D. Barrett after he had carefully considered authentic statistics, I give the following: "The bona-fide membership of these associations, spiritual societies, state, camp and local, is 150,000, while the total number of Spiritualists in the United States and Canada is 1,500,000." Quite enough to handsomely support mediums' homes and colleges, but very far short of the millions claimed as Spiritualists by the enthusiastic advocates of our cause in its early years.

With malice towards none, Mr. Editor, and with kindly feeling for all co-workers for the cause of Spiritualism, I remain, cordially yours,
M. T. LONGLEY.

CLARA WATSON'S VIEW.

She Expresses Very Definite and Positive Opinions.

I read with much interest the reports from Clara Stewart and Mrs. Longley, and also the headlines of the same as published in The Progressive Thinker dated June 6, and it seems to me none need question for one moment which of the two institutions—the Whitewater School or the Mediums' Home—is of greater importance; and the risk of being called a "pleader for ignorance," I boldly say with all due reverence to the memory of its founder, that the Morris Pratt Institute is of minor importance to that of a mediums' home.

While I believe in education, unfoldment, culture, and refinement as requisites for our speakers and mediums, I do not think that a Spiritualistic theological school is essential for the attainment thereof, nor is such a school at all vital to the furtherance of our cause.

There is no need for Spiritualism to fall into the rut of the customs and ways of the old and fast decaying religions that have had their day and ought to pass away. One of the prominent factors in propagating error, false teaching and orthodox nonsense has been sectarian schools; and the wonder is that there could be found an intelligent Spiritualist that would desire to pattern thereafter.

Great stress is laid upon having an "educated ministry" for our rostrum, meaning a theological college training, and every time this idea is put forth it is an insult to the many grand and talented workers past and present, that, backed by the unseen helpers, have made Spiritualism the power it now is in the world. It may be said that special Spiritualist schools are not the ideal to the ideal in the perpetuity of Spiritualism. There is nothing taught at the Morris Pratt school that cannot be acquired elsewhere. Our public school system, while not perfect in all its workings, is yet the pride of our nation and every facility is offered any aspiring man or woman, with any given natural intellectual ability, to fit themselves for public speaking so far as grammatical expression, formation of sentences, elocution, oratory, gesture, posture, etc., are concerned. All that is taught in the schools of our land, and as regards "homiletics," which according to authority, means, science of preaching—as regards learning to preach, this branch of study is utterly useless in Spiritualism. The great philosophy of Spiritualism does not need "preachers." Its need is live, active, sincere, competent and clean speakers, teachers and mediums, and all these have been and are, without such schools as the Morris Pratt Institute, and then if one really has a hankering to "preach," there are plenty of theological institutions where this science (?) is taught, without a constant drain upon the pockets of the Spiritualists at large, and would-be aspirants to our rostrum can study the philosophy, facts and phenomena of Spiritualism through its vast and valuable literature, through the seance-room and especially through the home circle.

It is announced from the Whitewater school that the psychic class is one of the features of the institution, and a psychic teacher employed to unfold spiritual gifts in the pupils, but I make bold to assert that there is no place so nicely adapted to the unfolding of mediumship as the home circle—the seclusion and quietude of the home and a few congenial souls, and let the teachers be the interested helpers from the spirit side. If there are dormant natural powers or gifts of mind or spirit, rest assured that honest effort and perseverance in this line will be rewarded with unfoldment.

It is not necessary that one should travel to Whitewater to find a place in which to develop psychic powers.

And then again, does one desire to study the Christian Bible, it is the height of absurdity to think one must journey to Whitewater to do so. A strong appeal is made in the Morris Pratt Institute report for funds to keep Moses Hull's Bible Class in existence, but it is his department in the school. But it may be proclaimed that Bible "exegesis" as taught at Whitewater is not vital to the perpetuity of Spiritualism. With all due deference to Mr. Hull's ability as an expounder of the Bible, and with equal deference to the whole Hull family as teachers or instructors, yet Spiritualism would endure without this school conducted by them. Mr. Hull has rendered valuable aid to the study of the Bible, and his works, and let the student equip him self or herself with his Encyclopedia of Biblical Spiritualism, let them take D. M. Bennett's Interrogatories to Jehovah, W. H. Bach's Big Bible Stories, Thomas Paine's Age of Reason, and the old Bible itself, and they can soon master its contents sufficiently to use it as a weapon in argument pro or con, for the sacred (?) word is all-sided.

The report of Clara Stewart states that the school started with fifteen students, and it is interesting to know how many there are now. I am credibly informed that a number of the original fifteen have left the school, for many reasons, not deeming it worth while to continue the course, while some, at least one or two, have come in during the year.

Now everyone knows that a certain amount of natural endowment or ability on the part of the individual is necessary to success as a public speaker, but the little effort that has been made in the Spiritualists' training schools in the past has developed the fact that people with not the slightest natural ability,

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To the Editor:—When I ordered the ten premium books I did not expect to receive as fine a lot as they are—elegantly bound, good paper, and fit to grace any man's library—Andrew Carnegie not excepted. Every man or woman who is interested in spiritual things ought to have them. I would not do without them for a good deal, and only wished I could buy 100 books of this kind on different subjects. You certainly are working on the Divine Plan.

Truly,
H. L. KELLER.

nor any acquired fitness; indeed people unusually deficient, with not the least qualification that tends toward successful rostrum work; those whose presence thereon would in every way be repellant to an audience possessing ordinary intelligence—I say past Spiritualist relief fund. If the five thousand dollars more dollars donated to the school enterprise could have been placed to the credit of the relief fund, great practical good would have been the result and no one would have been robbed of education or unfoldment of spiritual gifts.

Let it be emphatically reiterated that Spiritualism, grand, helpful, uplifting, ennobling, unfolding, instructing, demonstrating, reforming, redeeming and educating, is with us a mighty power for good all unadded in the past by the logical sectarian institutions with their stereotyped processes of education, nor does it need them now.

The question is, can the Spiritualists afford the expenditure necessary to the running of a sectarian school to foster the conventional whims of a half-dozen Spiritualists, and this at the cost of the care of the aged, sick and needy ones in our ranks? Emphatically, no.

CLARA WATSON.

Jamestown, N. Y.

THE GREAT QUESTION.

Will J. Erwood Presents His Views to Our Readers.

The question raised by the various writers in recent issues of The Progressive Thinker, as to which institution, among those commanding our attention at present, it is the duty of Spiritualists to support, has attracted my attention and interest, as I presume it has that of many others. Whatever the effect upon others, it has caused some agitation in the small amount of grey matter that has lodged somewhere between the top of my head and my shoulders, and I feel constrained to say "suffice" if you will allow one of the "uneducated" to "speak out in meekness."

I said a single question had attracted my attention, but that would not begin to tell the story. The Progressive Thinker and other good papers are so full of "Good Things," that I hardly know which attracts me most. Be that as it may, the reports and letters in No. 707 brings us face to face with some "mighty" important matters, and I am glad they have come up, as sooner or later they are bound to come before us. Of course such things naturally bring us in contact with financial matters, and reducing the whole thing, it is simply a question as to whether we have the "cash" to enable us to have what we want, or no.

It seems to me to be a self-evident fact, that if Spiritualists want to, they can do as much as any other denomination, or organization, if the term suits better, and could successfully finance the National Association, the state associations and our local associations and schools. It would almost seem that many of our Spiritualists are afflicted with paralysis whenever they get a goodly sum of "

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This leads us to consider the question of talismans. There used to be a universal belief that a jewel or almost any object might be charged mesmerically with good or evil influences; and though this idea would in modern days be regarded as a mere superstition, it is nevertheless an undoubted fact that such influence may be stored in a physical object, and may remain there for a very long period of time. A man can undoubtedly pour his influence into such an object, so that this definite rate of vibration will radiate from it precisely as light radiates out from the sun. Naturally the influence put into such an object might be either good or evil, helpful or harmful. In very many cases such magnetic a-

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